

Remarks

Counsel thanks the Examiner for the interview of 23 October 2009 pertaining to the Office Action dated 23 July 2009.

The Office Action dated 23 July 2009 has been carefully considered. Applicants thank the Examiner for his consideration of the arguments of 17 March 2009 in paragraph 5 of the Office Action and for his subsequent withdrawal of the rejection of claims 20-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 4, 582,138 (Balzer) in view of US Patent 5,869,434 (Mueller) as stated therein.

Claims 12-20 and 23-30 have been canceled without prejudice to the subject matter found therein. Claims 21 and 22 have been amended without the addition of new subject matter. Claims 31-49 have been added without the addition of new subject matter. Applicants respectfully submit that the amendments and remarks found herein place the claims in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the current claims in view of the following remarks.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 112

In Paragraph 8 of the Office Action, claims 21 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Applicants have amended claim 21 without the addition of new subject matter. Applicants respectfully submit that the amendment renders the rejection moot. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 21 and 22.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 102

In Paragraph 9 of the Office Action, claims 12-19 and 23-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent 4,582,138 (Balzer hereinafter). Applicants have canceled claims 12-19 and 23-30 without prejudice to the subject matter found therein and rendered the rejection moot. In light of the cancellations, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claims 12-19 and 23-30.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

In Paragraph 10 of the Office Action, claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Balzar in view of US Patent 5,232,910. Applicants have canceled claim 20 without prejudice to the subject matter found therein and rendered the rejection moot. In light of the cancellation, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claim 20.

Conclusion

In view of the amendments and remarks presented herein, Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested. If, however, any issues remain unresolved, the Examiner is invited to telephone Applicants' counsel at the number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,

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